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ABSTRACT

An exploratory study was made of 19 women who were gainfully employed while parenting their first infants who were enrolled in two day care centers providing excellent care. Emphasis was placed on understanding variations in mothers' perceptions of choices and conflicts associated with the dual role of worker and parent. Interview questions elicited information from mothers concerning considerations, choices, conflicts, and feelings associated with the dual role. Raters categorized mothers' responses according to stages of moral development proposed by Gilligan (1982). Analysis addressed commonalities and differences among the respondents. Findings suggested that participants could be grouped according to the orientations suggested by Gilligan's paradigm of moral development. Similarities seemed to exist in the reports of conflicts related to the dual role provided by women at different developmental stages. They consistently placed emphasis on the need for high quality day care. Differences were found in mothers' preferences for employment arrangements. The extent to which respondents felt that they had choices about their employment arrangements appeared to be related to feelings of conflict in their dual roles. (RH)

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ABSTRACT

Work and Family
A Study of Employed Women and the Care of Their Infants

The purpose of this study was to initiate exploratory research on women who were gainfully employed while parenting their first infants. Emphasis was placed on an increased understanding of variations in the perception of choices and conflicts associated with this dual role. The study sample included nineteen women who had their first children enrolled in two different infant day care centers. A structured set of interview questions was pilot-tested and revised prior to the interviews of the study.

The paradigm for moral development of women proposed by Gilligan (1982) was used in the design of four research questions, twenty-one interview questions and the training session for three objective raters. Interview questions elicited information on the experience of the respondents in relation to considerations, choices, conflicts and feelings associated with the dual role of working and parenting. Objective raters categorized interview transcripts according to descriptions of the stages of moral development. Research analysis addressed commonalities and differences between the respondents in terms of the four research questions.

Findings suggested that the respondents could be grouped according to the orientations towards the responsibility to caring for self and others suggested by the Gilligan paradigm of moral development. In addition, similarities seemed to exist in the reportings of conflicts related to the dual role by the women in the various

groups. Emphasis was consistently placed on the necessity of quality infant day care centers. However, differences were found in preferences for employment arrangements. These included options for maternity leaves and part-time jobs. The extent to which respondents felt that they had choices about their employment arrangements also appeared related to the experience of conflicted feelings about the dual role.

Dr. Judith G. Lister

WORK AND FAMILY

A STUDY OF EMPLOYED WOMEN AND THE CARE OF THEIR INFANTS

What influence does infant child care play in a child's life? The question is posed over and over again in terms of child development and the enhancement of attachment, trust, health, early learning and socialization. At the same time an equally important area of inquiry addresses the relationship between infant child care and the development of mothers, fathers and families. A recent study initiated research into this area through the assessment of the interview transcripts of nineteen women who were employed and had a child enrolled in an infant child care program. Variations in the perception of the dual role of working and parenting an infant and the related experience of choices and conflict were studied within the context of the paradigm of moral development of women developed by Carol Gilligan (1982). Findings revealed that the respondents could be categorized according to the descriptions of the stages of development and that women categorized in the various stages expressed commonalities in their perceptions of the dual role, attitudes toward infant child care and the experience of related dilemmas. Implications of the study suggest the importance of understanding not only the development of children within secondary care settings but also that of their parents. In a related way, the importance of the provision of options for both employment arrangements and affordable quality infant care were underscored. If an equitable social climate is to be encouraged for women, men and children, with respect given to the variations in family arrangements and values, then it appears particularly important to expand the concern for infant

child care to be inclusive of the development of parents and family systems.

Research Questions

The major areas addressed by the study are stated in four research questions as follows:

1.) How do women frame considerations related to working and parenting in their own thinking?

2.) How do women perceive and resolve conflicts and choices associated with the dual role of working and parenting?

3.) How do women feel about their decisions to work while their children are infants?

4.) How does the birth of a woman's first child influence her thoughts and feelings about working and parenting?

Research Design

The study was an analysis of structured in-depth interviews with women who had been simultaneously working and parenting an infant. Prior to the interview, respondents were informed as to why they had been selected for participation in the research. It was requested that they share their thoughts, feelings and insights about the topic under investigation. Anonymity was assured.

The interview sessions commenced with an explanation of the research interests of the interviewer. This was followed by an explanation of the overall process of the interview and the purpose of the study. A series of questions was then read from a printed sheet and responses were elicited. At the conclusion of the session the respondents completed an information sheet on personal

background factors.

Carol Gilligan's (1982) paradigm of moral development was used as a framework for understanding the experiences of women in this area. Attention was paid to the variations and commonalities in the perception of the dual role of working and parenting an infant, in the process of deciding about employment while parenting an infant, and in the subsequent experience of feelings.

Gilligan's schema for detailing the stages in the development of morality states that women view themselves through a context of human relationship and attachment to others. Thus women judge themselves in terms of the ability to care for others and to be responsive in relationships. Moral dilemmas are created by choices between obligation to self and responsibility to caring for others. Stages suggested by this paradigm reflect the development of an increasingly complex understanding of the relationship between self and others. The basic stages of moral development as depicted by this theory are outlined in the following descriptions.

1.)	Stage 1	thinking that is focused on caring for oneself; the primary consideration in resolving moral dilemmas is the ability to care for one's self interests
2.)	Transitional stage	criticism of one's thinking as being selfish; signifying a new understanding of the connection between self and others and leading to a new concept of responsibility
3.)	Stage 2	thinking that is focused on caring for others; the primary consideration in resolving moral dilemmas is the ability to care for others

4.)	Transitional stage	exclusion of caring for self in one´s thinking causes confusion between the notions of caring and self-sacrifice; confusion over ´goodness´
5.)	Stage 3	thinking that is focused on understanding the interconnection and interdependency between self and others; the primary consideration in resolving moral dilemmas is the ability to care for both self and others

Following the interview sessions the questions and responses of the women were typed and printed as formal interview transcripts. These transcripts were used during rating sessions with three objective raters who assessed the stage of moral development of each respondent in relation to the material generated by the interview questions. This procedure took place by rating the transcripts according to the stages of moral development delineated by Gilligan. Analysis of the four research questions of the study was then conducted through the assessment of variations in the experience of the respondents.

Sample

The sample for this study consisted of nineteen women who were gainfully employed while simultaneously parenting infants who were enrolled in child care programs. The study was limited to women who were parenting their first children as it was assumed that the choices and conflicts related to the decision to work while parenting

would be new and perhaps still in stages of unrest. Women with older children, or those who had previously had children in child care arrangements, were not included. This decision was made to ensure that the subjects were dealing with this particular moral dilemma for the first time.

All of the respondents were parents of children enrolled in an infant child care program. Since the research was not intended to address differences in maternal response to variations in the style of child care arrangements, the selection of sites was limited to two that provided daytime group care. It was also assumed that poor quality child care was likely to compound any maternal questions or doubts about the dual role. Therefore, it was decided that the sample would be selected from a population of women who had their children enrolled in quality child care centers. These decisions were made in an attempt to control for the possibility of effects from intervening variables. Criteria for the selection of the sites included high adult-child ratios, consistency of caregivers, health standards, and program emphasis on the developmental needs of young children (Kagan et al., 1980, Cataldo, 1983). However, it is important to note that the selection of women in these settings may have further defined the population to parents who were able to afford, and who chose to invest in, quality child care.

Information on the respondents was collected through the use of a Personal Information Sheet. Selected information from these sheets in reported in Tables 1, 2 and 3. Table 1 reports age, educational background, personal income level and household income level for each of the women. Respondents are identified by the number of their interview transcript. These numbers were determined

solely by the order of the interviews. The respondents were also grouped in this table according to the stage of moral development in which they were categorized during the rating sessions. This was done in order to allow for comparisons within each stage.

(Insert Tables 1, 2 and 3 and accompanying narrative.)

Analytic Procedures

The analysis of the data began with the categorization of the transcripts according to the stages of moral development. This procedure took place during two separate rating sessions. Because different sets of raters participated in these sessions separate charts report the findings of two groups of respondents. This distinction was made solely for the purpose of identifying the two rating sessions.

Three raters were used during each session. They were not familiar with the theory of Carol Gilligan and they did not have personal involvement wtih concerns related to child care. Following a training session, the raters worked to categorize each of the transcripts from the respondents according to the stages of moral development as described above. They received individual copies of the transcript being rated and proceeded to use a rating sheet to indicate the stage that they felt each respondent represented.

While the theory depicts three predominant stages of development, with two transitional stages in between, it was decided that they would be regarded as five separate stages. This was decided upon for the purpose of categorization as it was speculated that the responses of a woman could be predominantly representative of a

transitional stage of thinking. Thus the stages are referred to in this study as five numbered stages, ranging in their original sequence from number 1 to number 5.

Table 6 and Table 7 report the ratings on each of the respondents and the percentage of consistency amongst the ratings. After the individual ratings were reported, discussion was held amongst the raters and concensus was reached on the predominant stage of development for each of the respondents in relation to their responses to the interview questions.

(Insert Tables 6 and 7.)

The information in Tables 6 and 7 reports a high percentage of consistencey in the ratings on the respondents. In Group 1 there was 84% agreement overall and in Group 2 there was 94% agreement overall. Only one respondent had less that 50% agreement between the ratings (12%). For three respondents the percentage of consistency in ratings was 56% and for twelve of the total sixteen respondents there was total agreement in the stage ratings (100%).

During each of the rating sessions one of the transcripts had to be eliminated because the raters felt that it was impossible to rate. In addition, one of the raters knew a respondent in the second group so that transcript had to be eliminated as well. These situations reduced the number of transcripts analyzed for the study from nineteen to sixteen.

Following the categorization of the women by the objective raters, the transcripts were analyzed for differences and commonalities amongst the women at the various stages of moral development. Within each stage of

development, women were assessed in terms of both their oral responses to the interview questions and their written responses to questions on the Personal Information sheets. Thus, analysis addressed the potential contribution of variables in their backgrounds as well as themes within their narratives. Each of the research questions was considered within the context of the various stages of development.

Findings of the Research

Research findings suggested that the moral development of women provided one approach to understanding the maternal experience of working and parenting. Numerous factors contribute to the decision to work while parenting an infant, the combination of which is unique to individual lives. However, commonalities in terms of the perception of commitment to self and to others also appear to exist between women. A framing of these commonalities through the identification of stages of moral development allows for a greater understanding of the dilemmas posed by this dual role. It also allows for an examination of how a woman's stage of moral development may be associated with her experience of working while parenting an infant.

The transcripts were classified on the basis of the women's stage of moral development as reflected in their responses to the interview questions. Therefore, as expected, it became essential to recognize two factors prior to analysis of the transcripts: 1.) a range of variations existed amongst the experiences of individual women who were categorized as being at the same stage, and 2.) the responses of individual women frequently reflected more than one stage of development.

The clarification of these distinctions appeared

essential before generalizations could be drawn about individual women or groups of women in the study. It was recognized that women who were categorized as being in the same stage of development could appear at various points on a continuum of development. They also could be in periods of transition into or out of the stage. The raters were able to ascertain a predominant stage for each person. However, the reflections of the women were not bound by the characteristics of those stages.

The following discussion addresses the areas posed by the four research questions of the study. Each question is restated and followed by a discussion of the findings of the research. No transcripts were categorized in Stage 2. Therefore, this stage of development was excluded from the analysis. The discussion will commence with question #1 and then proceed through the following three questions in sequence.

The first research question addressed the perceptions of the respondents in relation to the dual role of working and parenting. Attention was directed to how the respondents viewed each of these roles and the related areas of concern they experienced. Considerations included the importance they attached to their work and maternal roles, the influence of secondary child care in the lives of their children, and the contribution of their spouses/housemates to child care and domestic labor.

Question #1:

How do women frame considerations related to working and parenting in their own thinking?

Stage 1 Women classified as being in Stage 1 spoke predominantly of the necessity of their children fitting

into their life schemes of full-time work. They valued their work, intended to continue working on a full-time basis, and emphasized the development of themselves through their work. They felt that their economic contributions to their families were essential to the lifestyles they desired and thus considerations of not working were associated with alteration of the level of household income and standards of living. They also cared a great deal about their parental roles. They were pleased to be parents and placed a great deal of importance on being involved with their children.

The location of quality child care was the primary consideration in the decision of these women to return to work. They were concerned about the development of their children and were confident that the child care centers they had selected were providing good care. However, unlike the women at the other stages, these women appeared to consider the development of their children as being separate from their own adult development.

Other considerations expressed by these women included dissatisfaction with the contribution of their spouses to domestic work and child care. All of the women viewed themselves as the primary caregivers for their children and a majority of them felt they were predominantly responsible for domestic work in their homes as well. Desire for more equality with their spouses in this area was expressed.

Stage 3 The framing of considerations for women classified in Stage 3 revolved around their concern for the maternal role. They expressed a strong sense of responsibility to be caring for their children and they clearly placed priority on their ability to be good mothers. In a related way, these women felt that their work roles were of secondary importance to their parental

roles. They speculated that part-time employment and child care arrangements would be desirable for both themselves and their children. But their predominant feeling was that the necessity of full-time employment conflicted with their desires to be caring for their children. Work was valued for the adult socialization and stimulation that it provided, but emphasis was consistently cited as the reason for being employed while their children were infants.

These women also emphasized the importance of child development and the related influence of secondary child care in the lives of their children. Child care was considered primarily in terms of its social value for children. It was perceived as being acceptable on a part-time basis, yet questionable in value on a full-time basis.

Another area of consideration was that of the contribution of their spouses to child care. All of the women in this stage were appreciative of the support they received. However, they tended to view the contribution of their spouses as being inconsistent and less valuable to the children than was their maternal care.

The energy demands of the two roles were perceived as being in conflict with each other. Responsibility to each role was experienced as creating a source of fatigue. It also appeared possible that conflicted feelings about full-time employment during the infancy of their children created an additional drain on their energy levels.

Stage 4 The women classified in Stage 4 were confused about their level of commitment to themselves and to their children. Prior to the births of their children they had placed priority on their own needs. However, following the births they had discovered the importance that they were attaching to caring for their infants, and in turn to the

maternal role. Thus alterations of self-perception appeared to be taking place in regard to the dual role of working and parenting.

Both of these women emphasized that the financial reward of full-time employment was essential to the well-being of their families. However, beyond that commonality their attitudes towards the importance of their work varied greatly. This may well be attributed to the fact that one woman had her child as an adolescent while the other did so after investing eleven years in a career.

The distinguishing characteristic of these women was the lack of a strong desire to become mothers. Both of them recalled their hesitation to have a child and emphasized that the fathers of the children had been the determining factor in their decisions to bear the children. Thus the positive experience of maternalism was somewhat of a surprise for them.

Commonalities of attitude were found in the appreciation of secondary child care. It was viewed as having a positive influence on their children and it was respected for its contribution to child development. However, variations existed in their experience of support from their spouse and housemate. Like the women in Stages 1 and 3, these women viewed themselves as the primary caregivers of their children. However, one of them perceived her spouse as making a significant contribution to domestic labor while the other woman did not.

Stage 5 The distinguishing characteristic of the women classified in Stage 5 was their perception of the role of working as being complementary to the role of parenting. While they expressed a strong persuasion that parenting was their foremost concern, they also emphasized that employment enhanced their ability to be good parents. They

valued their participation in both roles and felt that the major consideration was how to best blend them in order to benefit themselves, their spouses/housemate and their children. Reasons for wanting stimulating work were reported in three areas: 1.) it enhanced their sense of self worth, 2.) it refreshed them for their return to caring for their children, and 3.) it provided additional income for their families. At the same time, it was critical that the demands of employment not conflict with family responsibilities. This attitude appeared to be related to alterations that some of the women had made in their employment such as part-time work, flexible hours of work, temporary unemployment and a work place with close proximity to quality child care. Like the women in the other stages, these women emphasized many positive aspects of the maternal role. Yet only at this stage did some of the responses refer to the interconnection between feelings about working and parenting.

Priority was placed on the location of quality child care centers. In turn, such arrangements were appreciated for their contribution to the care and development of the children. While care provided by secondary caregivers was recognized as being different from parental care, it was respected as a positive and beneficial factor in the lives of the children. Quality child care was also seen as essential to the willingness of the women to be employed.

The contribution of spouses/housemate to domestic work and child care was viewed as being central to the successful combination of the roles of working and parenting. Unlike the other stages, the spouses/housemate of the women in Stage 5 were perceived to be assuming a great deal of responsibility in both of the areas. They were considered to be good caregivers and important to the

lives of their children.

A second dimension of the research addressed the perception and resolution of conflicts and choices. Attention was paid to variations of experience by women in the different stages of moral development. Particular aspects of experience included conflicts and choices in fulfilling the expectations for the working and parental roles, the shared responsibility with spouse/housemate for child care and domestic labor and the demands on personal energy.

Question #2:

How do women perceive and resolve conflicts and choices associated with the dual roles of working and parenting?

Stage 1 Women in Stage 1 did not perceive many conflicts between the two roles. As long as their children were provided with quality care they felt that it was perfectly acceptable to be employed on a full-time basis. They felt that they had chosen to have children and had chosen their lifestyles. They also recognized the financical necessity of their employment as part of those choices.

Difficulty in locating quality affordable child care posed the only major area of concern regarding the combination of the roles. They had been able to find quality child care for their children and thus seemed satisfied with their decisions to work while their children were infants. However, some additional conflict was posed in terms of the contribution of the spouses to domestic work and child care. For most of the women, resolution to

this conflict had not been reached. It appeared to be an on-going source of conflict that the women were dealing with in individual ways.

Stage 3 The women in Stage 3 perceived full-time employment while parenting a young child as a general source of conflict. Their responses suggested that a 'good' mother was one who provided direct care for her child. Thus child care provided by secondary caregivers was suspected as being second rate care, particularly if it was provided on a full-day basis. For some of the women these feelings were heightened by the persuasion that they had no choice about the necessity of working while their children were infants. Employment was perceived as being essential. Yet its demands on the time and energy of the women was felt to be conflicting with time and energy for their children. Resolution to conflicts between working and parenting did not appear to have been reached. Rather it seemed that coping mechanisms and rationalizations had been developed.

Another area of conflict was experienced in terms of the influence of full-time child care on the lives of their children. Secondary child care was typically valued for its contribution to the social development of children. Yet a strong preference was expressed for part-time care.

Personal energy level was perceived as a third area of conflict as the energy demands of working and parenting were viewed as conflicting with each other. This was particularly so because the women were working full-time, assuming primary responsibility for domestic labor and providing the majority of the child care at home. Again, resolution to the conflicts related to personal energy levels had not been reached.

Stage 4 The women in Stage 4 were unique in that they had

experienced reservations about the decision to have a child. Subsequently they had encountered the feeling of limited options in relation to the financial necessity of full-time employment. These two areas of feeling, in combination with the discovery of the importance they were attaching to the maternal role, appeared to be causing conflict over the dual role. Confusion was expressed in relation to how one could feel effective and responsible in both roles. These women appeared to be growing in relation to their participation in the dual role. While they had not resolved the conflicts they were experiencing, they were developing a greater understanding of the interconnection between caring for themselves and others.

Stage 5 Women in Stage 5 felt very strongly that the option had been there for them to not work while their children were infants and that they had actively chosen to work. They also seemed to have anticipated potential conflicts and to have dealt with them before they had become major problems. Examples of this included altering the hours of work or the nature of employment and postponing the timing of pregnancy until job security and a maternity leave could be assured. Some reference was made to conflicting demands on personal energy. However, greater emphasis was placed on the ability to re-design their lives to include their children. These women stressed that working refreshed their energies for child care as opposed to draining them. They stated that they did not want to be at home with an infant full-time.

The third area of research addressed how women felt about their decisions related to employment and child care. Attention was paid to the expression of feelings about each of the roles of working and parenting and emphasis was

placed on feelings related to the combination of the roles and reference to feelings of guilt.

Question #3:

How do women feel about their decision to work while their children are infants?

Stage 1 The women in stage 1 were convinced that they had made the right decisions about work and infant care. They expressed no qualms about working while their children were infants and instead chose to express how pleased they were with the contribution of secondary child care to the lives of their children. The addition of children into their lives had allowed them to enjoy being parents without hindering their work lives. They reported feeling content and pleased with their experiences of working and parenting.

Stage 3 Women in Stage 3 expressed feelings that were quite contrary to those of the women in Stage 1. Employment provided positive benefits, yet when considered in light of the maternal role it was a source of mixed emotions and guilt. Overall, these women felt that they should be providing more of the care for their children and that they should be working less. Feelings of guilt appeared to be associated with having to work full-time while their children were enrolled in a child care program.

Stage 4 The predominant feeling about working and parenting of the women in Stage 4 was that of confusion. They were not convinced that they had made the best decisions for themselves or for their children. They recognized the value of employment, but had superimposed upon it the discovery of pleasure and fulfillment in the maternal role. The benefit of each role was viewed as separate from the other, causing them to struggle to

understand their feelings in both areas.

Stage 5 At Stage 5 the women had very positive feelings about their decisions to work while their children were infants. They saw the mutual benefit of employment and quality secondary child care, and they appreciated the ways in which their periods of separation from their children enhanced their reunions. They felt fulfillment from both of their roles and were convinvced that they had made good decisions for the sake of everyone in their families.

The women who did have some feelings of unrest about the dual role were the women who were working full-time in settings removed from the location of their child care facilities. One of these women expressed her desire for part-time work. Another woman felt that a longer maternity leave and a child care facility at her place of work would have greatly eased her feelings about working while her child was an infant.

The fourth area of research addressed the possibility of alteration of the attitudes of the women about working and parenting following the births of their children. Emphasis was placed on whether or not the employment plans made during pregnancy continued to seem appropriate after the births of the children. Particular attention was paid to the expression of unexpected feelings and changes in the perception of the relative importance of the two roles.

Question #4: How does the birth of a woman's first child influence her thoughts and feelings about working and parenting?

Stage 1 For the women in Stage 1 the birth of their children confirmed their opinions about the importance of their employment and their ability to fulfill both roles.

They were convinced of what it would be like prior to the birth experience and they were not swayed to the contrary. They were happy to place their children in secondary care and to return to work. They also felt that they had sufficient time with their children. The experience of working and parenting was much as they had imagined it would be.

Stage 3 The women in Stage 3 appeared to be significantly influenced by the births of their children. The reality of the children had accentuated their feelings of commitment to others and caused new priority to be placed on the importance of the maternal role. While feelings of responsibility to their children truly became dominant, they were accompanied by conflicted feelings about employment. This range of responses had been anticipated. But the births of the children heightened the experience of them.

Stage 4 The women in Stage 4 seemed to have experienced the greatest degree of change of attitude following the births of their children. They had not expected, and seemed unprepared for, the attachment that they felt to their children. Thus they had discovered new aspects for consideration in regard to working and parenting.

Stage 5 For the most part the women in Stage 5 seemed to have anticipated their attachment to their children and to have weighed the advantages and disadvantages of employment prior to their births. They felt that they had chosen to work and that they had made good choices because they had sufficient time with their children. The births of their children confirmed their feelings about the importance of the maternal role and allowed them to adhere to the priorities that they had set during their pregnancies.

Significance of the Research Findings

The significance of the research lies in the understanding of how a woman's moral development may be associated with her decisions and experiences related to working while parenting an infant. As expected, differentiations in the feeling of responsibility to self and to others appeared central to the ways in which women viewed the choices and conflicts related to working and parenting. Similarly, such differentiations also seemed to be associated with how women felt about infant child care. Variations in the preferences for the ideal way to combine the two roles included availability of quality child care facilities, work options for flexible hours and part-time jobs, and extended maternity leaves.

The findings suggest that the differences in sex role expectations had a major influence on the experience of women in the dual role of working and parenting. This was so not only in terms of feelings about career development and working while parenting an infant, but also in terms of division of domestic labor and responsibility for child care within the home. In this regard a woman's expectations of herself, as well as those she has of her spouse/housemate, may be related to the stage of her moral development. Gilligan suggests that moral development is inextractible from direct experience. In line with this orientation, it may be suggested that the stages of moral development of the respondents may have been associated with several dimensions of their lives such as relationship with spouse/housemate, fulfillment gained through employment, and the availability of child care options. However, the nature of the relationship between the stage of the respondents' moral development and their life circumstances was not entirely clear.

The findings also highlight the role of maternal financial contribution to the family and suggest that such contribution may enhance one's sense of self through the ability to care for one's family. As women are afforded increased opportunities for gainful employment within the society, they may be increasingly likely to see potential for both self-development and financial gain. Employment opportunities and financial contribution to household are likely to be included as important components of the adult experience of women. However, the intention to be gainfully employed may conflict with the desire to have children or to provide the desired amount of direct child care. If, as the study suggests, feelings in this area may not be generalized, then it appears particularly important that work and child care options be developed that support a range of possibilities. Such options might include opportunities for flexible benefits, flexible work hours, job sharing, extended maternity and paternity leaves, and child care centers at adult work sites. In this way concern could be addressed to the child care preferences of men and women and the provision of quality child care arrangements could be designed to be supportive of strong parent-child relationships.

Another important area of significance is in the perception of alternatives related to working and parenting. Increased understanding of the potential benefits and conflicts associated with working while parenting an infant would be likely to expand the awareness level of women about the design of their adult lives. Attention could be paid to the desire for children, the selection of employment, and the preferred contribution of spouse/housemate to child care and domestic labor. While such a range of considerations cannot be entirely planned

or controlled, awareness of them may alert women to concerns and dilemmas related to the combined roles of working and parenting. Women may be provided an increased understanding of the potential benefits and drawbacks of working while parenting an infant and thus be in a more educated position for making related decisions.

The study addresses one area of ramification of the increase in the proportion of women in the work force. It addresses an important dimension of human development and highlights a concern for the maternal role that is frequently overshadowed by emphasis placed on professional involvement and financial considerations. The findings suggest a relationship between the stage of a woman's moral development and her experience of the dual role of working and parenting. They also suggest the need for the alteration of the work place to include attention to the adulthood development of women and the generation of quality child care options. If women are to truly be afforded equal opportunity, it appears essential that these concerns be addressed and understood.

Table 1
Personal Information on the Respondents

Respondent	Rated Stage	Age	Educational Background	Personal Income Level	Combined Household Income Level
1	1	32	college degree	over $25,000	over $50,000
10	1	25	high school diploma	$15,000-$20,000	$30,000-$40,000
11	1	28	college degree	$5,000-$10,000	$20,000-$30,000
16	1	35	college degree	$5,000-$10,000	$10,000-$20,000
4	3	36	associates degree	$15,000-$20,000	$40,000-$50,000
8	3	38	masters degree	$15,000-$20,000	$30,000-$40,000
12	3	26	college degree	$5,000-$10,000	$20,000 $30,000
5	4	33	college degree	$15,000-$20,000	$30,000-$40,000
17	4	20	-	$5,000	-
2	5	31	masters degree	$15,000-$20,000	$30,000-$40,000
3	5	28	college degree	$10,000-$15,000	$30,000-$40,000
7	5	37	doctoral degree	$20,000-$25,000	$40,000-$50,000
9	5	30	masters degree	$15,000-$20,000	$20,000-$30,000

Table 1 (Continued)
Personal Information on the Respondents

Respondent	Rated Stage	Age	Educational Background	Personal Income Level	Combined Household Income Level
13	5	31	college degree, associates degree	$5,000-$10,000	$30,000-$40,000
15	5	32	college degree	$15,000-$20,000	$40,000-$50,000
19	5	46	masters degree	-	$40,000-$50,000

This table reports that four women were classified in Stage 1, no women were classified in Stage 2, three women were in Stage 3, two women were in Stage 4 and seven women were in Stage 5. Thus the largest group of women were classified in Stage 5. In terms of educational level, all of the respondents who had advanced degrees were classified in Stage 5 except for one women in Stage 3 who had a Masters degree. At the same time, three of the seven women in Stage 5 did not have advanced degrees. Similarities within the groups were not found in terms of age or income levels.

Table 2 reports the reasons that the respondents listed for why they were working while parenting a child under three years of age. Again, the respondents were grouped according to the stage of moral development in which they were classified.

Table 2
Reasons for Working While Parenting

Respondent	Rated Stage	Reasons Listed for Working While Parenting a Child Under Three Years of Age
1	1	1. I need and want the stimulation and intellectual challenge I get from work.
10	1	1. economic factors 2. personal satisfaction 3. to provide my child with things I didn't have as a child
11	1	1. where I work 2. income 3. feelings about myself/my husband's attitude
16	1	1. money 2. need for personal growth
4	3	1. money
8	3	1. money and need to get out of the house to do some constructive activities with other adults
12	3	1. need for money
5	4	1. financial
17	4	1. need money to buy clothes, food, medicine, diapers, etc.
2	5	1. financial 2. my own mental well being 3. my child's social development
3	5	1. insurance benefits 2. added income 3. personal satisfaction

Table 2 (Continued)
Reasons for Working While Parenting

Respondent	Rated Stage	Reasons Listed for Working While Parenting a Child Under Three Years of Age
7	5	1. There are no reasons for not working. I have a good job which I enjoy very much.
9	5	1. financial
13	5	1. income 2. type of job (because child with me)
15	5	1. personal fulfillment
19	5	1. my own mental and emotional well-being 2. mental stimulation 3. financial advantages

This information indicates that financial need was a common concern across the groups of women. However, other concerns such as personal stimulation and satisfaction were also listed across the groups. Reasons listed for working while parenting a child under three years old were not clearly associated with the rated stages of moral development of the respondents.

Table 3 reports the groups of people whom the respondents perceived as being supportive of their decision to work while parenting an infant. It lists the categories of people and the number of respondents that indicated support in the categories.

Table 3
Support Systems

Category of Support	Number of Respondents Who Indicated Support in This Category
Spouse/Housemate	16
Your Parents	14
Your In-laws	11
Your Siblings	14
Your Neighbors	9
Child Care Workers	12
Female Friends	15
Male Friends	6
Your Employer	14
Your Co-Workers	14
Your Subordinates	10

In general, the respondents listed a large number of support systems. All of the respondents indicated that their spouses/housemates were support systems, fifteen women listed female friends as support systems and fourteen women listed their parents, siblings, employers and co-workers as support systems. At the same time, only nine women listed their neighbors and only six listed male friends.

Table 6
Ratings on Respondents in Group 1

Respondent	Stage Ratings	Percentage of Consistency
1	5 5 5	100
2	4 4 5	56
3	1 1 1	100
4	5 5 5	100
5	3 3 5	12
6	2 3 3	56
8	1 1 1	100
9	5 5 5	100
10	5 5 5	100

Percentage of consistency across the respondents - 84%

Table 7
Ratings on Respondents in Group 2

Respondent	Stage Ratings	Percentage of Consistency
11	1 1 1	100
12	1 3 3	56
13	5 5 5	100
15	5 5 5	100
16	1 1 1	100
17	4 4 4	100
19	5 5 5	100

Percentage of consistency across the respondents - 94%

The information in Tables 6 and 7 reports a high percentage of consistency in the ratings on the respondents. In Group 1 there was 84% agreement overall and in Group 2 there was 94% agreement overall. Only one respondent had less than 50% agreement between the ratings (12%). For three respondents the percentage of consistency in ratings was 56% and for twelve of the total sixteen respondents there was total agreement in the stage ratings (100%).

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